

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 SAB-01

SAJ-01 ACDA-07 SSM-03 /089 W
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O R 061146Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9009

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 5196

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE SYRIAN-LEBANESE PACIFICATION EFFORT
IN SOUTH LEBANON

REF: (A) STATE 194549, (B) DAMASCUS 5146, (C) DAMASCUS 5181

1. EMBASSY DAMASCUS HAS NO INFORMATION AND DID NOT INTEND
TO IMPLY THAT SYRIA MAY BE CONTEMPLATING USE OF ITS REGULAR
MILITARY FORCES IN SOUTH LEBANON REGION ADJACENT TO ISRAELI
BORDER. WE HAVE BEEN IN HABIT OF USING TERM "SOUTH LEBANON"
TO APPLY TO REGION EXTENDING SOUTH FROM RASHAYYA-SIDON
AXIS. SYRIAN MILITARY FORCES IN THIS AREA APPEAR TO BE
ORGANIZING AND ARMING LEBANESE ARMY VANGUARD FORCES TO MAKE
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INROADS IN AREAS NOW CONTROLLED BY LAA IN SOUTH. SYRIA

REALIZED THAT AS FAR AS ISRAELIS ARE CONCERNED
THIS IS "OFF LIMITS" TO REGULAR SYRIAN DETACHMENTS.

2. ORCHESTRATION OF MEDIA CAMPAIGN ACCUSING KHATIB
OF TREASON FOR PERMITTING MEETING OF LAA OFFICERS WITH
ISRAELIS MIGHT HAVE BEEN INTENDED TO WIN SOME LAA DEFECTORS
TO SIDE OF VANGUARDS. IN ANY CASE, HARSH SARG MEDIA RESPONSE
TO LAA/IDF MEETINGS WAS PREDICTABLE ONCE ISRAELIS PUBLICIZED THESE
MEETINGS ALONG WITH ISSUES SUCH AS LEBANESE WORKING IN
ISRAEL, MARKETING THEIR CROPS, ETC. SARG HAS KNOWN OF
VARIOUS LEBANESE-ISRAELI MEETINGS ALONG ARMISTICE LINES
SINCE 1949, BUT PUTTING MOST RECENT SESSIONS INTO PUBLIC
DOMAIN GENERATED IDEOLOGICAL RESPONSE FROM DAMASCUS WORRIED
THAT "OPEN BORDERS" WOULD TEND TO SAP WILL OF ARABS IN
THEIR CONFRONTATION WITH ISRAEL.
MURPHY

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